



INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL CHANGE RESEARCH

IAIDIR-016/2013
April 19, 2013

Dear country representatives,

You will have recently received a note from the chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) concerning elections and vacancies for the upcoming Conference of the Parties (CoP). **On behalf of the Chair of the Executive Council and of the Directorate, we take this opportunity to point out serious issues concerning SAC elections for the coming 21st and 22nd CoP in 2013 and 2014.**

In 2012 there were 2 resignations from the SAC, and CoP 20 decided to conduct an election during the intersession. The IAI directorate provided an electronic voting mechanism, but at the voting date in November not enough countries registered for the secret ballot to provide quorum. As a result, the normally 10 member SAC continues to be 2 members short.

In June of 2013, 4 SAC members will end a three-year membership term. For 3 of these it will be the 2nd term which, according to the Agreement Establishing the IAI, should be their final term. 1 member is coming to the end of the 1st term and if she is re-nominated maybe re-elected. In 2014, 4 further SAC members will complete a term. For 2 of those this will be their 2nd, final term.

As a result of the carry-over of 2 vacancies from 2012 and the coincidence of 5 final terms over the next 14 months, the SAC is facing an almost complete lack of continuity in its membership.

This disruption of SAC functions coincides with substantial changes in the IAI structure and staffing: the office is in the process of moving to Montevideo; 4 assistant and 1 manager positions have been terminated over the past months; and an assistant director for science programs has just been chosen after a two-year vacancy to commence in June. In addition the IAI has just opened a new office for science-policy liaison in Buenos Aires and is hoping to open the new office for science planning in the near future in Brazil. Both these offices would greatly benefit from an active, engaged SAC that is familiar with and knowledgeable on IAI affairs. The extent of replacements in the SAC composition over the coming 14 months will be disabling and its timing at this juncture of the IAI's scientific and structural development is most unfortunate.

In order to assure continued effective guidance by the SAC for the CoP and the directorate, we suggest that country representatives consider options to maintain continuity in the SAC membership and provide a mechanism for a more moderate renewal process in the future. This is my suggestion:

- 1) For CoP 21 in June 2013 to conduct the postponed 2012 election of 2 new SAC members from the nominations by the parties and the associates already received (additional nominations may be made).
- 2) For CoP 21 to consider maintaining on the SAC 3 or 4 of the SAC members who come to an end of their term. One of these may be re-elected normally. Additional ones may be asked to stay on for 1 or 2 more years although they have come to the end of their final term. Re-electing these would contradict a term of the IAI Agreement, but an exceptional, informal membership would be beneficial

in this period of transition.

3) For CoP 22 in 2014 similarly to limit the renewal of SAC membership, so that in future years regular turnover would only affect between 1 and 3 SAC members at a time. Since the SAC should have 10 members, such turnover would provide for the continuity that is needed for the CoP and directorate to receive well-informed, reliable and continuous advice by its SAC

Over the past years the number of nominations for SAC elections has been limited. Since there is a large number of vacancies over the next 14 months our suggestion is to nominate sufficient candidates to fill all vacancies and maintain the pool of nominations until CoP 22 so that both conferences in 2013 and 2014 have the liberty to decide how many members they may wish to renew. Guidance on the expertise needed and criteria for nominations has recently been provided by the SAC chair. Nominations must include the name and a short curriculum for the nominee. Please send your nominations before May 10 to Tânia (tania@dir.iai.int) so they can be circulated to member countries in time.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this IAI important issue and look forward to welcoming you in Montevideo, in June.

Sincerely,



Holm Tiessen
Executive Director



Carlos Ereño
Executive Council Chair